

1-23. (Canceled).

24. **(Currently Amended)** A tomato composition obtained from tomato juice or tomato passatas having the following composition in percentage by weight:

-dry residue 5.5 - 20%,

-water 94.5-80%,

100% being the sum of the two components,

wherein said dry residue comprises water-insoluble tomato solids and water-soluble tomato solids, wherein the amount of water-insoluble tomato solids and water-soluble tomato solids in the dry residue ranges in percentage by weight as follows, based on the total weight of the dry residue:

-water-insoluble tomato solids from 18% to 30%,

-water-soluble tomato solids from 82% to 70%.

25. **(Previously Presented)** A tomato composition according to claim 24, wherein the amount of water-insoluble solids and water-soluble solids in the dry residue ranges in percentage by weight as follows:

-water-insoluble solids from 20% to 30%,

-water-soluble solids from 80% to 70%.

26. (Canceled)

27. (Currently Amended) A composition comprising animal and/or vegetable fats ~~and mechanically admixed with a [[the]] tomato composition according to claim 24 or 25 obtained from tomato juice or tomato passatas having the following composition in percentage by weight:~~

-dry residue 5.5 - 20%.

-water 94.5-80%.

100% being the sum of the two components.

wherein said dry residue comprises water-insoluble tomato solids and water-soluble tomato solids, wherein the amount of water-insoluble tomato solids and water-soluble tomato solids in the dry residue ranges in percentage by weight as follows, based on the total weight of the dry residue:

-water-insoluble tomato solids from 18% to 30%.

-water-soluble tomato solids from 82% to 70%.

28. (Previously Presented) A composition according to claim 27, wherein said animal and/or vegetable fats are solid at room temperature.

29. (Previously Presented) A composition according to claim 27, wherein said animal and/or vegetable fats are liquid at room temperature.

30. (Previously Presented) A composition according to claim 28, wherein said animal and/or vegetable fats comprise butter or margarine.

31. (Previously Presented) A composition according to claim 29, wherein said animal and/or vegetable fats comprise olive oil.

32. (Previously Presented) A composition according to claim 27, wherein said animal and/or vegetable fats comprise soft, hard or grated cheese.

33-34. (Canceled)

35. (Previously Presented) A tomato composition according to claim 27, wherein the composition contains said fats, based upon the weight of the tomato composition, in an amount ranging from 10% to 25% by weight.

36. (Canceled)

37. **(Currently Amended)** A method of saucing food which comprises mixing [[the]] with food a tomato composition of claim 24 with said food obtained from tomato juice or tomato passatas having the following composition in percentage by weight:

-dry residue 5.5 - 20%,

-water 94.5-80%,

100% being the sum of the two components,

wherein said dry residue comprises water-insoluble tomato solids and water-soluble tomato solids, wherein the amount of water-insoluble tomato solids and water-soluble tomato

solids in the dry residue ranges in percentage by weight as follows, based on the total weight of the dry residue:

-water-insoluble tomato solids from 18% to 30%,

-water-soluble tomato solids from 82% to 70%.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 37, wherein said food is pasta, meat, fish or vegetables.

39. (Currently Amended) A ready-to-use sauce for food comprising ~~[[the]]~~ a tomato composition ~~of claim 24~~ obtained from tomato juice or tomato passatas having the following composition in percentage by weight:

-dry residue 5.5 - 20%,

-water 94.5-80%,

100% being the sum of the two components,

wherein said dry residue comprises water-insoluble tomato solids and water-soluble tomato solids, wherein the amount of water-insoluble tomato solids and water-soluble tomato solids in the dry residue ranges in percentage by weight as follows, based on the total weight of the dry residue:

-water-insoluble tomato solids from 18% to 30%,

-water-soluble tomato solids from 82% to 70%.

40. **(Currently Amended)** A ready-to-use sauce for food according to claim 39, further comprising animal and/ vegetable fats mechanically admixed with the tomato composition the composition of claim 27.

41. **(Previously Presented)** A composition comprising an essence aroma and/or preservative for food and the composition of claim 24.

42. **(Previously Presented)** A composition comprising an essence aroma and/or preservative for food and the composition of claim 27.

43. **(Previously Presented)** Food comprising the tomato composition of claim 24.

44. **(Previously Presented)** Food comprising the composition of claim 27.

45. **(Currently Amended)** A tomato product prepared by a process comprising separating by filtration tomato serum from water insoluble solids present in either tomato juice or in tomato passatas using a separation solid-liquid apparatus at a temperature of from 5°C to 25°C wherein said tomato juice or tomato passatas is maintained under stirring with a stirrer at an angular speed from 1 rpm to 20 rpm during filtration, the stirrer being of a shape to convey the tomato juice or tomato passatas toward the central axis of the apparatus, and recovering said tomato serum and/or said water insoluble solids as said tomato product, wherein the tomato product has the following composition in percentage by weight:

-dry residue 5.5 - 20%,

-water 94.5-80%,

100% being the sum of the two components,

wherein said dry residue comprises water-insoluble tomato solids and water-soluble tomato solids, wherein the amount of water-insoluble tomato solids and water-soluble tomato solids in the dry residue ranges in percentage by weight as follows, based on the total weight of the dry residue:

-water-insoluble tomato solids from 18% to 30%,

-water-soluble tomato solids from 82% to 70%.

46. (Previously Presented) A tomato product prepared according to the process of claim 45, wherein the apparatus for separating the liquid from said tomato juice or tomato passatas is a sieve maintained under an oscillating motion, the oscillations being from 1 to 20 oscillations/min.

47. (Previously Presented) A tomato product prepared according to the process of claim 45, wherein sterile conditions are used or the final tomato product undergoes a sterilization process.

48. **(Currently Amended)** A tomato product prepared according to the process of claim 45, wherein the process is conducted at temperatures in the range of ~~[[5]]~~ 10°C-15 ~~[[25]]~~°C, at atmospheric pressure, or at pressures slightly higher than atmospheric pressure, from 760 mm Hg (0.101 MPa) up to 900 mm Hg (0.120 MPa) or by applying pressures slightly lower than atmospheric pressure, down to 450 mm Hg (0.06 MPa).

49. (Previously Presented) A tomato product prepared according to the process of claim 45, wherein a separation solid-liquid apparatus constituted of a vessel having walls with slots or with

holes is employed, wherein the width of the slots or the diameter of the holes is not greater than 0.1 mm, the slot length ranging from 30 cm to 2 meters, said vessel having a cylindrical section, the separator being equipped with a mechanical stirrer, wherein the distance between the separator walls and the stirrer blades is from 0.5 to 2 cm.

50. (Previously Presented) A tomato product prepared according to the process of claim 46, wherein a concave- or flat-shaped sieve, having hole diameters or slot widths not greater than 0.1 mm is operated at atmospheric pressure.

51. (Previously Presented) A tomato product prepared according to the process of claim 45, wherein the equipment employed comprises a cylinder constituted by food grade stainless steel wherein the walls have openings or slots formed by woven wire cloth, or by screens, or said walls have holes, being the width of the openings of the slots, or hole diameters not greater than 0.1 mm, said cylinder having an inner stirrer in the form of an archimedean screw revolving free in the fixed cylinder, or the cylinder is a rotating tube wound helically about a cylindrical axis.

52. (Previously Presented) A tomato product prepared according to the process of claim 45, wherein the rotation of the stirrer is at an angular speed of 2-10 rpm.

53. (Previously Presented) A tomato product prepared according to the process of claim 51, wherein the cylinder is in a horizontal position, and has a diameter ranging from 30 cm to 1 meter or a length from 2 meters to 20 meters for apparatus working in a discontinuous way or about 20 meters for apparatus which works in a continuous way.

54. (Previously Presented) A tomato product prepared according to the process of claim 45, wherein the separation solid-liquid apparatus is provided with slots having a width or holes having a diameter not higher than 0.5 mm.

55. (Canceled)

56. (Previously Presented) A tomato product prepared according to the process of claim 45, wherein a tomato composition having a content of water-insoluble solids in the range from 20% to 30% based on dry residue is added to either lyophilized or cryoconcentrated serum, or a serum concentrated by an osmosis membrane or by evaporation under vacuum.

57. (Withdrawn) A process for the separation of tomato juice serum from a tomato suspension by using a separation solid-liquid apparatus wherein the suspension to be filtered is maintained under stirring at an angular speed from 1 rpm to 20 rpm, the stirrer being of a shape to convey the suspension toward the central axis of the apparatus, or wherein there is no stirrer and the apparatus rotates.

58. (Withdrawn) A process according to claim 57, wherein the apparatus for separating the liquid from a tomato suspension is a sieve maintained under an oscillating motion, the oscillations being from 1 to 20 oscillations/min.

59. (Withdrawn) A process according to claim 57, wherein sterile conditions are used or the final tomato product undergoes a sterilization process.

60. (Withdrawn) A process according to claim 57, wherein the process is conducted at temperatures in the range of 5°C-25°C, at atmospheric pressure, or at pressures slightly higher than atmospheric pressure; from 760 mm Hg (0.101 MPa) up to 900 mm Hg (0.120 MPa) or by applying pressures slightly lower than atmospheric pressure, down to 450 mm Hg (0.06 MPa).

61. (Withdrawn) A process according to claim 57, wherein a separation solid-liquid apparatus constituted of a vessel having walls with slots or with holes is employed, wherein the width of the slots or the diameter of the holes is not greater than 0.1 mm, the slot length ranging from 30 cm to 2 meters, said vessel having a cylindrical section, the separator being equipped with a mechanical stirrer, wherein the distance between the separator walls and the stirrer blades is from 0.5 to 2 cm.

62. (Withdrawn) A process according to claim 57, wherein a concave- or flat-shaped sieve, having hole diameters or slot widths not greater than 0.1 mm is operated at atmospheric pressure.

63. (Withdrawn) A process according to claim 57, wherein the equipment employed comprises a cylinder constituted by food grade stainless steel wherein the walls have openings or slots formed by woven wire cloth, or by screens, or said walls have holes, being the width of the openings of the slots, or hole diameters not greater than 0.1 mm, said cylinder having an inner stirrer in the form of an archimedean screw revolving free in the fixed cylinder, or the cylinder is a rotating tube wound helically about a cylindrical axis.

64. (Withdrawn) A process according to claim 57, wherein the rotation of the moving part is at an angular speed of 2-10 rpm.

65. (Withdrawn) A process according to claim 63, wherein the cylinder is in a horizontal position, and has a diameter ranging from 30 cm to 1 meter or a length from 2 meters to 20 meters for apparatus working in a discontinuous way or about 20 meters for apparatus which works in a continuous way.

66. (Withdrawn) A process according to claim 57, wherein the separation solid-liquid apparatus is provided with slots having a width or holes having a diameter not higher than 0.5 mm when treating tomato suspensions derived from partially ripened tomatoes.

67. (Withdrawn) A process according to claim 57, wherein the tomato composition has a content of water-insoluble solids in the dry residue from 18% to 30%.

68. (Withdrawn) A process according to claim 57, wherein to tomato compositions having a content of water-insoluble solids in the dry residue in the range from 20% to 30% is added lyophilized or cryoconcentrated serum, or serum concentrated by an osmosis membrane or by evaporation under vacuum.

69. (Previously Presented) A tomato composition according to claim 24 or 25 wherein said composition is obtained from tomato juice.

70. A (Previously Presented) tomato composition according to claim 24 or 25 wherein said composition is obtained from tomato passatas.

71. (Previously Presented) A tomato product prepared according to the process of claim 45, wherein said water insoluble solids are present in tomato juice.

72. (Previously Presented) A tomato product prepared according to the process of claim 45, wherein said water insoluble solids are present in tomato passatas.

73. (Previously Presented) A composition according to claim 32, wherein said cheese is hard cheese and/or grated cheese present in an amount of from 10% to 25% by weight, based on the weight of the tomato composition.

74. (Previously Presented) A composition according to claim 32, wherein said cheese is soft cheese present in an amount of from 50% to 300% by weight, based on the weight of the tomato composition.